

SUPPORTING POLICING, SERVING SCOTLAND

JUNE 2009

SPSA EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION AWARDS 2009

The work we carry out within SPSA to support our partners in policing and the wider criminal justice system is fundamental to delivering a safer Scotland.

From the training police officers receive to make it onto our streets, to the technology they use when they are out there. From the intelligence they need to progress an investigation, to the evidence gathering needed to secure a conviction. From the expertise needed to take out a local cannabis farm, to the international partnerships needed to disrupt a money laundering scheme.

At the SPSA Excellence and Innovation Awards 2009 we recognised those staff who are committed to this cause, and to the day to day delivery of outstanding and innovative services to our customers.

In this special Awards edition of Emerge, we tell you our winners' stories.

MAKING COMMUNITIES SAFER

As an organisation, we endeavour to focus our efforts on contributing to safer communities and our success is measured by this.

The winners of this category were expected to demonstrate excellence in a project or initiative that clearly contributes to making the streets of Scotland a safer place to live increasing the confidence of the Scottish public.

The award went to the Additional Capacity Project Team at the Scottish Police College for their outstanding efforts in delivering additional recruits to the Scottish police service.

Over sixteen hundred new recruits have been put through their paces at the Scottish Police College this year - the largest cohort in Tulliallan's history.

To meet the Scottish government's target of providing one thousand extra officers by 2011, the Scottish Police College Additional Capacity Project Team was formed and began recruiting new instructors from the forces, and working with Fife Council to erect new classrooms sympathetic to the heritage site.

The College has pulled out all the stops to ensure that the needs of the additional students are met and that every student gets to experience the same high quality of training that the College is renowned for.

John Geates, Director Scottish Police College said: "I'm immensely proud of the project team. They started with a very difficult remit and pulled together a process and action plan that everyone could work to try to



deliver. As far as the staff across the College are concerned, they fully bought into that action plan and they have worked their socks off to make it happen."

Coping with so many new recruits has required creative solutions. Staff have given up their bedrooms so bunk beds could accommodate more students. Housekeepers have more cleaning to do. Extra fitness classes are laid on at night. And kitchen staff have given up unpaid breaks to ensure everyone's fed on time.

Superintendent Andrew Tatnell, Head of Probationer Training said: "In twenty-five years of policing, I've never come across such a large team of people who have all been very clear on the one aim and that is to deal with these additional capacity numbers and to produce trainee police officers who are ready to go out and police the streets of Scotland. It's an amazing team effort and is testament to their professionalism and commitment to the police service."

The awards were presented by Cabinet Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill and were attended by guests from across the criminal justice community. Speaking about the event, Mr MacAskill said:



"As a country we don't celebrate achievement enough in Scotland and it is important that we recognise excellence wherever we see it. There are people working across the justice system to deliver a safer and stronger Scotland, and this year's SPSA awards demonstrate the fantastic work being done by many committed and professional staff within the organisation. They have my congratulations and thanks."

SUPPORTING CRIMINAL JUSTICE



By working with our partners across the criminal justice community we aim to make a significant impact on the prevention and detection of crime. Those shortlisted in this category were asked to demonstrate excellence and/or innovation that helped us to achieve this.

The deserving winner was the DNA section of Forensic Services Glasgow for the introduction of an automated DNA profiling system.

In 2001, staff in Glasgow's DNA lab profiled two thousand samples. Five years later turnover had grown to over thirteen thousand profiles. With demand fast outstripping capacity, the team turned to technology for a solution. Dr Pamela Strathorn was instrumental in validating the new technology and in following through on her vision that the 'bio-robot' could be integrated with other instruments in the DNA process.

"We used to do it by having to hand manually pipette samples from one tube to another tube", said Dr Pamela Strathorn. "So we had to have 15 checking procedures to extract a sample of DNA and produce a DNA profile. Now with the bio-robot, we only have one critical checking procedure at the beginning of the process allowing all the other DNA practitioners to perform other tasks."

In one batch, the robot now deals with the equivalent of 750 manual pipetting actions. The team spent many months not just validating the new robot, but ensuring it could talk to existing instruments which measure DNA and visualise the profiles. This cut manual entries by nearly 400 per batch and has dramatically reduced the risk of transcription errors.



"Capgemini were delighted to be involved in this years SPSA Awards, in particular our support of the 'Supporting Criminal Justice' award. Recognising the need for more inter-agency working, Capgemini are spearheading the delivery of bold, innovative and cross criminal justice services aimed at helping Police, Prosecutors and Courts handle first hearings electronically."

John McHale, Scottish Business Development Director, Capgemini UK

Director of Forensic Services Tom Nelson said: *"This robotic facility is not about replacing the skills that our many high-quality staff bring to forensic analysis but is about improving the efficiency of how we use their skills and talent."*

"The new robotic DNA tester will allow us to test more samples, more quickly – reducing the time it takes us to get results back to the investigators within the police who need them to clear up crimes."

"Across Scotland we are working flat out to balance the very sophisticated and intensive work our forensic teams do on complex cases such as murder and rape, with the need to support the police in tackling higher volume crimes that they encounter every day. The public rightly expect us to have the capability and flexibility to do both and that's where making the best of new technology can help us."



"As a major network supplier to SPSA, BT was delighted to sponsor the 'Leading on Technology' category of the SPSA Awards and welcomed the opportunity to support and recognise innovative thinking about the use of technology. We believe that well-implemented information communications technology (ICT) can bring massive benefits to any organisation. Through our work with Disclosure Scotland, the SPSA and the 999 call handling service we are working to maximise the benefits that ICT can bring."

Mervyn Gibb, Police and Justice Partner, BT Public Sector Scotland

LEADING ON TECHNOLOGY



Technological advancement is crucial to our business. In order to continue to enhance our service delivery we must constantly encourage development. Those shortlisted in this category had to demonstrate the development or use of technology in an innovative or creative way to make a difference to the work they carry out.

Our Technical Architecture Division were the successful team on the day, winning the award for their creative solution of command and control proof of concept.

Command and Control is the nerve centre of every police force. But with Scotland's eight forces using a wide range of different applications, sharing data is not always straightforward.

So a sixteen-strong team from SPSA Information Services ICT was tasked with testing the ACPOS vision of getting everyone within the Scottish forces on to one common system.

To test the National Command and Control Platform, the Proof of Concept team had to construct a virtual system, load it with data from multiple forces and monitor its performance under extreme pressure.

Lyle Freeman, ICT Technical Architecture Division said: "This was an incredible exercise to set up. We're talking about 1800 working positions, 150 servers, and we emulated the two engine rooms by having a drum of 70 miles of fibre cable separating the two virtual sites. One of the biggest challenges was to test the system to its limits and ensure it would never be down for long.

"At the moment, in the event of a serious disaster the force systems will take anywhere from one hour to four hours to recover. The requirements of the new system were that it had to recover within five minutes - and ICT's stringent test simulation has proven it will do just that."

SPSA ICT Programme Manager Stevie Doogan said: "The test part of the programme was absolutely essential to ensure that what we were proposing will actually work in the real world. It was a large and complex exercise, but extremely valuable as we are now aware of a number of key issues that need to be addressed going forward."

Following the Proof of Concept, the new design has been endorsed and the first force is expected to go live next May.

THE PINKERTON AWARD

2009 is Scotland's Year of Homecoming and to mark the occasion we introduced the Pinkerton Award – named after the famous Scot who founded the first detective Agency in the United States. This award recognised the special achievements of one individual who had demonstrated not just excellence but who had stood out from crowd.

The winner of this prestigious achievement award was expected to establish or set in motion a new initiative based on their strength of character to go out and achieve their vision.



They had to demonstrate drive, determination and enthusiasm and be an ideal ambassador for SPSA.

Dr Pamela Starhorn was the deserving winner, who just weeks after achieving her goal of a Reporting Officer's post with Forensic Services Glasgow, agreed to put her training on hold to validate the DNA lab's new bio-robot. Such was her dedication to the task, Pamela not only made sure the new robot was fit for purpose, she also had the vision to develop software to allow it to talk to existing instruments, creating a fully automated profiling system.

Pamela worked closely with the development specialist to deliver a package that was tailor made to meet the needs of SPSA Forensic Services. The integration of the system has had huge benefits, both in saving money and in the turnaround time for DNA analysis allowing one batch of samples to be processed in the same time that it took two people three days to do - allowing the scientists to concentrate on the expert decision-making only they can carry out.

Pamela said: *"It's been a change to the whole processing system but it's benefited the labs in Dundee as well as ourselves. It's been a huge challenge for me. It's been something completely different that might not ever come round again in my career, so there's lots of benefits despite the fact that I've had to put off my training slightly."*

Pamela worked above and beyond the call of duty as well as necessitating a move out of her area of expertise in order to hold discussions with representatives from different fields. However, through her enthusiasm and determination she was able to successfully manage the project.

Head of Operations at Forensic Services Glasgow, Andrew Sweeney said: *"Pamela is extremely committed to the team which I think is very, very important. She's the type of person that is 'can do' rather than 'why me?', and she has this tremendous ability to see a task through to the highest level. Although she has these skills, she manages to have humility attached to it and an infectious enthusiasm to everything she does."*

WORKING WITH PARTNERS AWARD

SPSA is committed to proactive engagement with our stakeholders, customers and partners across the Scottish Police Service and wider criminal justice community.

Those shortlisted in this category had to demonstrate excellence, creativity or innovation in a project or piece of work that developed and improved relationships with our stakeholders and engendered an atmosphere of collaborative working.

Their work took them to Girvan Academy in Ayrshire where the Interventions Unit has helped senior pupils take charge of the 'Shared Responsibility' project, promoting peer education at all levels. A collaboration between the Colombian government and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency, the Ayrshire pupils have been 'buddied' with teenagers at a school in Bogata to teach each other about the impact of cocaine on their communities.



The buddies on both sides of the Atlantic are tasked with writing a story about the "journey" cocaine takes from production to consumption - a challenge which captures the imagination and builds relationships.

Donna Robertson, Knowledge Manager, SCDEA said: *"We have tried to move away from the traditional police ideology of 'Don't do drugs. Drugs are bad.' and look at how we can contextually have young people learning about the damage they do, and also giving them the right skills base to be able to make their own choices."*

The pupils have also been able to meet with a wide range of partner agencies and experience the truth of drug use first hand by speaking with an ex drug abuser.

Interacting with those affected on both sides of the Atlantic has made the young people determined to tackle the issues head on.

Marianne, a pupil involved in the project said: *"We were given a fantastic opportunity to talk to an ex drug abuser, which I think I can say for everyone, was probably the highlight of the trip. We all came out changed from that experience. The story she gave to us was very eye opening. It really did make you think about the person as a person, rather than a problem."*

The proactive and positive approach adopted by the Shared Responsibility project at Girvan now looks set to become an exemplar in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence.